DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 317 060 FL 018 403

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TITLE Review of CAI Materials.
PUB DATE Oct 89
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and Literatures (13th, Youngstown, OH, October 27-28, 1989).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Authoring Aids (Programing); *Computer Assisted Instruction; *Courseware; Media Adaptation; *Media Selection; Recordkeeping; *Second Language Instruction; Student Records; Word Processing

ABSTRACT

A discussion of computer software and courseware for second-language instruction outlines considerations for selecting software of various kinds and presents a list of selected computer programs. Suggestions are made for choosing text-specific software, non-text-specific software intended for language instruction, word processors intended for language instruction, and teacher support software, including authoring systems and electronic grade books. The accompanying selected bibliography of computer-assisted instructional software is categorized by type, and within type by publisher and language. Materials in French, German, Spanish, and Italian are listed.(MSE)

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REVIEW OF CAI MATERIALS

In the fall of 1982. the Foreign Language Department at the University of Southern Mississippi found that it had around $700 remaining from a film grant that had to be spent or the administration would soon take the money away from us. We decided to buy a computer for faculty use. About a third of the faculty was enthusiastic. meaning that about two-thirds really weren't interested in the machine. All agreed. however. that if the computer could be used to write materials that would. primarily. alleviate workbook and other homework correcting and scoring and the ubiquitous test- and quiz-making chores. and that if the one-third was willing to do the work for all. all would be happy. We had visions of less tedious. monotonous demands on our time especially at the first- and second-year levels in French. Spanish. and German.

So. with our $700 we bought a Radio Shack computer with 32K of RAM. the cheapest monitor available. and a cassette tape recorder for storage--and we "looked into" learning to program. By the end of the school year. we were still using the red pencil. still typing tests and quizzes afresh. To paraphrase Alexander Pope. a little learning and much naiveté wasted $700.

Paper presented at the Annual Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and Literatures (13th, Youngstown, OH, October 27-28, 1989).

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I am now at Kent State University, and the same pertains here, although the typing is done on a word processor. To lessen homework correction the decision at Kent was to put the answers on file in the library and to prohibit teachers from correcting it (or at least from giving points counting toward the final grade for it). For first-year courses one person makes up hour exams and the final (all given in a block testing period). Each exam is made up afresh each time. It doesn't have to be this way.

The purpose of this paper, then, is to suggest that some major publishers are producing computer material (of varying worthiness) that will substitute for written homework while interesting the student, that materials are available for non-text specific applications, and that certain teacher-support materials can ease your burden in teaching and record keeping. Some publishers even supply test banks that will alleviate test and quiz construction. However, finding both CAI material and a test bank based on the same text is not easy at either the high school or college level. I'll address that while referring to the bibliography. It selectively lists several items available. Some are better than others. Some are more adaptable for use by teachers and students--the text-specific or text-tied programs. And some are free. Permit me to mention some of the ways a teacher might undertake choosing CAI materials.

TEXT-SPECIFIC SOFTWARE

The most convenient way to "computerize" instruction is to choose a text specifically for which computer-assisted instructional material has been prepared. There are several on the market. An example for Spanish: if you are a college teacher, consider Houghton-Mifflins En Contacto by Valencia, Merlonghi and Weissenrieder. Look at the whole package. The text, workbook, audio tapes

and other ancillaries are excellent. CAI material is available for both the Apple computer with a minimum of 48K and the IBM PC (or compatible) with 192K. Written by James Pusack using his DASHER Authoring program, the exercises are relatively easy to use and coorelate chapter by chapter to the text: they substitute for written exercises and can alleviate correcting written homework. The student gets immediate feed-back, pointers for correction of mistakes, and a score for each exercise is provided by the program. To help the teacher, there is a test bank by Maureen Weissenrieder providing two tests for each lesson. It is available on disk (for MS-DOS or Apple II machines) allowing the teacher to choose and copy easily from ASCII files (that are easily transferable to a word processor) and also allowing the teacher to edit (add, delete, and alter) the test as desired. Both the student disks and the teacher's test bank on two disks are furnished "free to adopters".

Not all publishers' packages are this complete. EMC Publishing, for instance, offers one entitled ¡Mucho gusto!. The computer material for Apple machines with 64K consists of nine disks. It is easy to use and scores the student's work. However, the text on which the CAI is based isn't very good since its organization is rather uncoordinated and incomplete for a first-year text. ¡Mucho gusto! offers no tesk bank.

For Spanish Scott Foresmam's Voces y visitas (for level I), Pasos y puentes (level II), and Arcos y alamedas (for level III), offer another choice. The text and workbooks are fine, but the software, simplistic and brief, has few exercises per lesson. It does, however, include a test generator disk (for the teacher) and a game disk.

For college French one should consider Harper and Row's Voilà by Heilenman, Kaplan, and Tournier. The text and tapes are very good and the software is

excellent. Written by Professor Daniel Calvez, the CAI is "user friendly" and clear. Its best feature is one that allows students to print out their answers: printed answers can be turned in to the teacher: the software can truly substitute for written homework: it can substitute for in-class quizzes, if used in a controlled manner: it also provides scores for each exercise.

NON-TEXT SPECIFIC SOFTWARE

The bibliography lists other packages teachers might consider. I shall not comment on all of them here. Rather, let us consider teachers who have a text they want to continue with and who want to provide some sort of CAI to accompany it. For this purpose it is difficult to use software developped for another text. Yes, specific structures or grammar points can be identified for students to work with in most CAI materials while using a different text, but other things make it difficult: vocabulary, verb tenses, idioms, and various grammar structures that the teacher has not yet presented. Usually students get thwarted--and they stop using the material. However, the most practicable articulation would be the use of non-text specific software (that must be purchased). Particular structures are the focus in these programs and they do a pretty good job, albeit at the expense of other things. Subject and object nouns tend to turn out to be "libro," "buch," and "livre." You might find food vocabulary with command forms when you have presented that vocabulary with regular and irregular present tense verbs. There are public domain programs treating just vocabulary that are just about as good as many of those available for that purpose from the major publishers . To mention four from D. C. Heath, Valette and Valette's French and Spanish for Mastery programs are good. I also found their French and Spanish Facts for Fun and Practice just plain fun though they

are probably more appropriate to second year. They are, however, not free: Mastery-- $165 and Facts--$81.

One should beware of some non-text specific programs: EMC's Deutsche Grammatik mit Spass by Marlis and Markus Erni and National Textbook Company's Amigo: A Beginning Spanish/English Computer-Assisted Vocabulary Program by Robert Wood. On-screen feed back in Deutsche Grammatik is frankly gruff, and Woods vocabulary drills are a bit illogical. For instance, on the screen the student sees the word "Pencil" in English: type "lapiz" and it's incorrect. With much fiddling around, one realizes the program wants el "lapiz" as a response. Then, Spanish to English: on the screen appears "the pencil:" type "el lapiz" and you're wrong. The program wants just the noun.

Since I am into complaints, let me make just two more concerning accent-mark generation and sluggish programs. These two pertain to several of the bibliography's entries.

Getting an accent mark to appear on the screen is, from one programn to the next, as varied as the number of keys on the keyboard--and the multiples thereof. Programs can require three separate key strokes: CONTROL/ESC (at the same time) and E to get é; some two: forward slash (/) and then u for ú in Spanish or back slash (ç) u for ù in French (Valette's Mastery series). Some MS-DOS programs (for IBM's) send the student all over the keyboard. To a large extent this accent-mark problem cannot now be avoided. Almost all are equally laborious to generate. But help may be on the way: the Voilà CAI from Harper and Row for MS-DOS, is the simplest of all. Constantly at the bottom of the screen appear the "F" keys (on the numerical pad) students use to generate vowels with diacritical markings: pressing "F" 1 = e, "F" 2 = è, 3 = ê, etc. Simple, as it should be. Maybe other programmers will follow this lead.

Many students probably don't do touch typing proficiently or type with any speed on the computer, but those who do will probably be frustrated by what I have termed "sluggish programs." With DASHER drills especially, if you type at a normal speed, the flashing cursor makes you think you should stop and allow it to catch up with you. Then, press ENTER, the screen slowly wipes out top to bottom and reappears slowly top to bottom. Several Apple programs operate in this fashion. Most MS-DOS programs don't respond sluggishly: the cursor moves quickly and the new screen appears quickly. But even MS-DOS machines are "sluggish" in their own fashion, usually requiring booting the DOS and then the program before getting underway with the lesson. As I understand, copyrighting prohibits a programmer's putting the DOS on a disk for sale or for free distribution, although the user may record DOS on a disk after purchase--if there is space on the disk.

OTHER NON-TEXT SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

Now, suppose that teachers do not want to "computerize" the first- and second-year classroom but do want to have students use a wordprocessing program for writing in the second or third levels of instruction. They should especially consider two programs: MicroTac Software's Language Assistant Series for the IBM PC or PS/2 with 256K offering programs for Spanish, French, German and Italian and Heinle and Heinle s Système-D for French (and in 1990, I understand, there will be a Spanish version). For IBM's, Système-D (now in version 1.1) has a built-in word processor from which the student can access a bilingual dictionary and examples of word use, a large conjugated-verb index, and a grammar and usage data base explaining and exemplifying structures. Although touted as a first- and second-year "general purpose" program and since students

must a priori know grammar terminology and be able to question their usage in a given construction, it is more appropriate to higher levels. It's not free: one copy of the program (now 1.1 -- 2nd ed.) is $150 and site licenses start at $300 for fewer than 50 students. Installing it on a network at Kent State was laborious and costly: it required that one of the authors come to the campus before the set up on a network was completed.

While I have not yet reviewed the Language Assistant Series, it promises some of the same features as Système-D: an on-line bilingual dictionary (to which one can add entries), a conjugated-verb index, and a grammar data base: it can be accessed from most MS-DOS word processors. At a cost of $50, it should get a lot of attention. While both Système-D and the Language Assistant Series still leave it to the teacher to do correcting and scoring, pedagogically they seem to offer the student the opportunity to make fewer mistakes and, thereby, the teacher to do less correcting.

TEACHER SUPPORT SOFTWARE

For the really ambitious teachers who do not like the text-specific or non-text-specific packaged deals on the market, they can write their own text-support materials without learning to program. The DASHER Authoring System (for both Apple and IBM) makes the process free of computer angst if not effortless: it does take time. But the result is exactly (for better or worse) what you want it to be. To return to my initial interest in CAI (avoiding endless correction of the student's written work), if one wanted to, and if it were legal, all text and workbook exercises could, conceivably and with effort, be put into DASHER-drill format. The latter includes fill-ins, completions, transforms, and the likes with record keeping whereby the student (or teacher or both) receive an

account of the student's score after completion of each section of the lesson. Both Archive2 and its update, HeathTest Plus, (billed as test generators) perform similarly to DASHER Drills, but they include no record keeping. Other so-called authoring systems are on the market. For use in foreign language applications, beware: they are usually for "authoring" business presentations with charts and graphs--and they usually cost a bunch.

The final "teacher comfort" to mention is the electronic grade book. They allow storing, weighting, calculating, summing, averaging, and so forth. They figure grades for you at any point in the semester. Houghton-Mifflin's Grade Performance Analyzer is excellent, though for both Apple and IBM it requires two disk drives. Harper and Row's GRADES: The Electronic Grade Book by Thomas Easton for the IBM is also excellent and permits memo making on individual grade reports. Both are free to adaptors of Houghton-Mifflin or Heath texts. But without too much labor one can create one's own grade book on any spreadsheet program. As long as the formulae are correct, what you invent will work as efficiently and efficaciously as those professionally produced.

CONCLUSION

If you want to integrate CAI into the classroom and to have access to teacher-support materials cheaply, choose carefully within the confined limits imposed on you. If your school has only Apples and no oranges, you are already limited: in fact, the trend in CAI development by the major publishers is to the oranges nowdays. If you are interested in non-text specific software, be sure to review it before you buy it or, the case being, the text it sort of goes with. And be sure you are committed to implementing it into your program. Fischer's study in French Review is the only study I am aware of that indicates CAI is (even

marginally better than a traditional program in which the teacher corrects those countless pages of written homework we would all like to be free of. In Pennington's Teaching Languages with Computers: the State of the Art, Chapelle and Jamieson suggest that the jury is still out on CAI's efficacy. Finally, keep in mind that integrating CAI materials into the program requires time and lots of work--probably the same amount of time and work presently necessitated by homework correction.

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SPANISH

Jarvis, Ana C., Raquel Lebredo, Francisco Mena. ¿Como se dice...?, 3rd ed., 1986. Archive Computerized Testing Program for IBM PC 192K, 2 drives, 1 program disk, 1 text-specific test items disk.

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EMC Publishing

FRENCH

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GERMAN

Kraft, Wolfgang. Deutsch: aktuell 1. 1979. CAI program by James F. Funston and David F. Myers, 1985, 10 disks for level I, $350, Apple with 48K.

SPANISH

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Harper & Row, Publishers.

FRENCH

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Heinle & Heinle

FRENCH

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Holt, Rinehard & Winston

SPANISH

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FRENCH

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Jian. Gérard and Ralph Hester. Découverte et Création. 4th ed. 1985.

GERMAN

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SPANISH

Valencia, Pablo, Franca Merlonghi, and Maureen Weissenrieder. En contacto: A First Course in Spanish. 3rd ed. 1988. (Also IBM.) (A test bank by Maureen Weissenrieder for Apple on two disks is also available for this text.) Also IBM.

Macmillan Publishing

SPANISH

Brod, Evelyn F. and Carol J. Brady. Viajemos 2001. 1990. Not yet reviewed.

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FRENCH

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SPANISH

Woodford, Protase E., Conrad J. Schmitt, and Randall G. Marshall. McGraw-Hill Spanish: Amistades. 2nd ed., 1989. For Apple 64K or IBM 192K.

Random House, Inc.

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FRENCH: Rendez-vous. 2nd ed. Muyskens et al. 1986. (Also IBM)

GERMAN: Alles Gute! 2nd ed., by Brigs and Crean. 1986. (Also for IBM).
Deutsche Sprache un Landeskunde. 2nd ed., by Crean et al. 1985.

ITALIAN: Prego! 2nd ed., by Lazzarino. (1984)

SPANISH: Dos mundos. By Terrll, et al. (1986) (Also IBM)
¡En camino! 3rd ed., by Neale-Silva, et al. (1985)

Underwood, John and Richard Bassein. Juegos communicativos. New York: Random House, Inc., 1987. Two single-sided disks for Apple with 128K RAM. Keyed to Puntos de partida, 2nd ed., by Knorre et al.

---. Jeux communicatifs. New York: Random House, Inc., 1987. Same hardware requirements as above. Keyed to Rendez-vous, 2nd ed., by Muyskens et al.

---. Kommunicative Spiele. New York: Random House, Inc., 1987. Same hardware requirements as above. Keyed to Deutsche Sprache und Landeskunde, 2nd ed. by Crean et al. and to Alles Gute!, 2nd ed., by Briggs and Crean.

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FRENCH: Bonjour, ça va?, 2nd ed. by Rochester et al.
Deux mondes, by Terrel et al.
Kaleidoscope, 2nd ed. by Omaggio et al.
Quoi de neuf?, by Phillips et al.
Montage: deuxième niveau, by Baker.
Ensuite, by Hirsch et al.

ITALIAN: Italiano, by Pease and Bini.

GERMAN: Kontakte, by Terrell et al.
Texte et Kontexte, by Clyde et al.
Deutsche Sprache und Landeskunde, 3rd ed., by Crean et al.

SPANISH: Al corriente by Marks and Blake
En directo by Boylan et al.
Motivos de conversacion, 2nd ed. by Neale et al.
Pasajes, 2nd ed. by Bretz et al.
Puntos de partida,
?Qué tal?, 2nd ed. by Dorwick et al.

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FRENCH

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SPANISH

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NON-TEXT SPECIFIC SOFTWARE (by publisher)

CONDUIT (The University of Iowa, Oakdale Campus, Iowa City, Iowa.)

FRENCH

Hope, Geoffery R. and James P. Pusack. ELFE: Elementary French Exercises. 1988. DASHER format exercises for Apple IIGS and IBM PC, XT, PC Jr., PS/2 models 25, 30, 50, 60 with DOS 2.10-3.30; 128K, one drive with color monitor (and mouse for the IIGS). Part I: Verb Forms; Part II: Function Words; Part III: Sentence Patterns. ($200).

Phillips, Robert and Paul LaReau. On pratique le français. For Apple with 48K. Part I: Easy verb drills; Part II: Hard verb drills (up to nine tenses); Part III: Vocabulary drill (to which teachers can add items). Students can access review screens. ($110).

SPANISH

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EMC Publishing

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GERMAN

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ITALIAN

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PORTUGUESE

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RUSSIAN

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SPANISH

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Quinn, Robert A. and W. Frank MacArthur. Let's Practice Spanish. Three disks, level I, $105, Apple.

---. Spanish Word Games. One disk, level I, $40, Apple.

D.C. Heath

FRENCH

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SPANISH

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FRENCH

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Noblitt J., D. Sola, and W. J. A. Pet. Système-D: Writing Assistant for French. Version 1.1. Three disks, but requires IBM PC-XT, AT or PS/2 with hard disk, 3 megabytes storage, 512K RAM: $150. Color monitor advised.

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Holt, Rinehard and Winston

FRENCH

"Generic Software" for:
Invitation 3rd ed. by Gilbert Jarvis, Thérèse Bonin, Diane Birckbichler.
Basic Conversational French, 8th ed., by Constance K. Knop and Julian Harris.
Langue et langage, 5th ed., by Oreste Pucciani and Jacqueline Hamel

SPANISH

"Generic Software" for:
Encuentros by Spinelli and Rosso-O'Laughlin.
Dimelo Tu by Samaniego et al.
Charlando by Inman.
Espanol en espanol by Shumway et al.
Con mucho gusto by Valette et al.
Contigo by Ozete and Guillen.

(The French and Spanish software listed above is by Gessler Publishing.)

MicroTac Software, San Diego, CA.

Language Assistant Series. 1989. For IBM PC or PS/2 with 256K and DOS 2.0 or later. Packages for Spanish, French, German, and Italian. Has online, bilingual dictionares (alterable). 2,000 conjugated verbs, grammar help, accented characters. Can be addressed from a word processor. $50.

National Textbook Company, Lincolnwood, Illinois

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SPANISH

Wood, Robert S. Amigo: A Beginning Spanish/English Computer-Assisted Vocabulary Program. 1987. For Apple with 64K. Two disks. Three levels of difficulty. Teachers can create, edit, and run their own vocabulary tutorials.

Scott, Foresman

SPANISH

Tres en raya: With Spanish Test Generator. 1989. (No author) Correlated with but not necessarily specific to:

Voces y vistas. 1989.
Pasos y puentes. 1989.
Arcos y alamedas. 1989.

For Apple with 128K. Package contains Test Generator, Test Storage Disk, Game disk and backup. Three double-sided, reproducible Questions disks (one for each level).

TEACHER SUPPORT MATERIALS (by publisher)

CONDUIT

Pusack, James P. DASHER Authoring System. The University of Iowa, Oakdale Campus, Iowa City, Iowa: CONDUIT, 1984. ($150)

Allows teachers to make up their own drills in French, Spanish, German, and English. It "prompts" for elements to type in, making it easy to use and not requiring programming knowledge in creating questions, answers, instructions, and examples. Fill-ins, transformations, full-sentence construction, and vocabulary review: all easy to create.

Harper and Row

Easton, Thomas A. GRADES: The Electronic Grade Book. New York: Harper & Row, 1988. One disk. For IMB PC, XT, AT or Ps/2 and compatibles: 60K RAM, DOS 2.0 or higher. For storing and computing quizzes & exam grades, weighting and calculating. Prints single student records, class records, histograms which show course results in graphic form. Can include a 255-character memo on report printout.

D.C. Heath

Archive2: An Item Banking, Test Construction, and Test Printing System. No author. D. C. Heath and Co.: Lexington, Mass.: 1986. For IBM PC, 192K, 2 drives, one program disk, one text specific test items disk, User Manual. A test generating program providing access of hundreds of multiple choice, true/false, and fill-in questions. Allows teacher to edit. Can print answer keys. No programming experience needed. Has preset key map for accent marks.

HeathTest Plus. no author, D. C. Heath and Company, Lexington, Massachusetts. 1989. Prepared by Engineering Software Associates, Inc. Requires IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT, PS/2 or compatible, with a minimum of 256K memory and two drives or a hard disk drive, a dot matrix or laser printer, DOS 2.0 or higher. Plus the appropriate data disks accompanying the textbooks listed above.

Houghton Mifflin Company

Grade Performance Analyzer. no author. Developed by Delta Software, Inc. 1986. For Apple with 48K and two disk drives. And for IBM.

Research Design Associates, Inc., Stony Brook, New Hork.

Frommer, Judith. MACLANG. Version 4. 1989. For Macintosh computers. Academic Computing (Vol. 3, No. 6, February 1989: 6) says the program "allows language teachers inexperienced in computer use to prepare interactive lessons ... ." Versions for French, Spanish, Italian, German, Greek, Russian, Turkish, Romanian, Portuguese and Japanese are available. Has video-disc interface. $99.95. Not reviewed.

Rapid Recall II. no author. 1987. For IBM PC. $80. For students, teachers, administrators. Writing, record keeping, note taking.